

Filed for intro on 05/22/2002

SENATE RESOLUTION 209

By Blackburn

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Officer Stephanie Bellis
for her meritorious service to the Brentwood
Police Department.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our collective freedom and safety, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans have continued this time-honored tradition through meritorious service in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Officer Stephanie Bellis has served with courage and gallantry and deserves proper recognition for her heroism as an Officer of the Brentwood Police Department, for which brave service she was recently nominated for the prestigious Buford Pusser Officer of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, Officer Bellis has served with great bravery and ability throughout her career; the events of a recent Monday testify to her unsurpassed courage, skill, and devotion; and

WHEREAS, on May 6, 2002, at approximately 1:10 P.M., an armed robbery occurred at the Bank of America location at Franklin Road and Harpeth Drive in Brentwood; the suspect fled

north on Franklin Road and was stopped at the traffic light at Franklin Road and Old Hickory Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, Officer Bellis responded to the robbery and proceeded north on Franklin Road, where she unknowingly pulled parallel with the suspect with two lanes of traffic separating them; and

WHEREAS, the suspect immediately opened fire on Officer Bellis with an assault rifle, riddling her vehicle with deadly fire; Officer Bellis abandoned her vehicle to use it as cover and then, despite being faced with obviously superior firepower, returned fire to her attacker; and

WHEREAS, during the exchange of gunfire, Officer Bellis advanced upon the suspect despite being wounded in the right arm; eventually, she shot him in the leg, forcing him to flee south from the intersection; remarkably, Officer Bellis had the presence of mind to use her radio to warn other officers responding to the scene that the suspect was armed with an assault rifle; and

WHEREAS, as the suspect fled, Sergeant Tommy Walsh arrived at the scene, unaware of the danger of the situation; the suspect opened fire on Sergeant Walsh, wounding him, and then approached his patrol car pointing his weapon at Sgt. Walsh; and

WHEREAS, responding officers then opened fire and subdued the threat, and Officer Bellis rushed to assist her wounded peer; selflessly, she never advised anyone of her own wounds until medical help had arrived for Sergeant Walsh; and

WHEREAS, it is certain that Officer Bellis's bravery and decisive action in the face of immense danger saved the lives of numerous bystanders and fellow officers; and

WHEREAS, on that fateful day as on all others, Officer Bellis performed her duties with the utmost skill, dedication and professionalism; her service can only be categorized as outstanding; and

WHEREAS, she is a credit to her community, her profession, and this State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Officer Stephanie Bellis of the Brentwood Police Department for meritorious service and unsurpassed courage and character in the line of duty, congratulate her on being nominated for the Buford Pusser Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award, and offer our thanks for a difficult job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.